JONES

A Conservatory of Music

Architecture

B. S.

1912

A CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

BY

ROBERT TAYLOR JONES

THESIS

FOR THE

DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

IN

ARCHITECTURE

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

1912

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

JUNE 1st, 1912.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

ROBERT TAYLOR JONES

ENTITLED A CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

IS APPROVED BY ME AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN ARCHITECTURE.

David Varon
Instructor in Charge

APPROVED: Frederick M. Mann

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF Architecture

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It is proposed in this problem to study the design of

A CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC.

The Problem.

It is desired to erect upon a university campus a magnificent building which shall be commemorative of the great masters of music and a momument to the intelligence of the music-loving people and an expression of their desire for musical education for the youths of the land. All of the departments of the conservatory are to be housed in one building. It is estimated that a maximum of three hundred students will avail themselves of the privileges of this institution and that they will be distributed through the various departments in the following manner:--

Two hundred in the Department of Piano;

One hundred fifty in the Department of Voice;

Fifty in the Department of Reed and String Instruments;

Fifty in the Department of Brass Instruments;

Three hundred in the Department of History and Musical Theory.

The students will be expected to obtain instruction in the cultural subjects, that is language, literature, science, etcetera, in one of the other buildings on the campus, with which this problem has nothing to do. The building is to be two stories in height, with a basement, and must fulfil the following requirements:--

I. Administration.

A. Offices for the director;

1. Public, 500 square feet.

2. Private, 600 square feet.

3. Stenographer, 400 square feet.

4. Toilet, cloak room, and storage vaults, 200 sq. ft.

B. Offices for instructors.

1. Three offices, at 400 square feet each.

II. Instructional.

A. Voice.

1. Five studios at 600 Square feet.

a. It is estimated that each instructor in voice will be able to attend sixty half hour periods per week. If the students meet with him twice per week, thirty can be accommodated in that time. If there are one hundred fifty students in the department of voice, the five studios will be necessary to accommodate them.

2. Offices for the instructors, 200 square feet.

3. Rooms for ensemble singing, 1500 square feet.

B. Piano.

1. Ten studios, at 600 square feet.

a. This number of studios has been determined on the basis that each instructor in piano will be able to meet fifteen pupils twice each week for a one hour period.

2. Offices for instructors, 200 square feet.

3. Room for ensemble piano, 1500 square feet.

C. Special Instruments.

1. Orchestra.

a. Two rooms, at 750 square feet.

2. Band.

a. Two rooms, at 750 square feet.

D. Theory.

1. Three class-rooms, at 750 square feet.

E. Library, 4000 square feet.

1. Office for librarian, 500 square feet.

F. Museum, 3500 square feet.

III. Presentation.

A. Concert Hall, seating 1500 people, 10,000 square feet.

1. Cloak rooms, toilets.

2. Rooms for artists.

3. Foyer.

B. Student recital chamber, seating 300,--3500 square feet.

The basement is to contain the heating plant, storage, service, toilets and cloak rooms. The site of the building is upon a slight elevation overlooking a quadrangle and a sunken garden in the campus.

The Solution. --Relation of Units.

The method of administration of the School of Music is not an elaborate one. The student body is primarily composed of adults who obviously do not need personal supervision from a centralized governing agency. The classes are small, usually only one in number, and each student is largely responsible to his instructor. It is possible that some provision should be made for administration of the many practice rooms but this, taking into consideration the type of intelligence to be found in the student body of the school of music, would probably operate automatically. The function of the director then would be rather to direct the policy of the institution than otherwise and that of the instructional staff would simply be for purposes of instruction. The office of the director might be placed anywhere so that it would be within easy reach of the students and public.

The nature of musical education does not necessitate any particular arrangement of the teaching units. The voice, piano, and special instrument studios might very well be intermingled, if the partitions were thoroughly sound-proof, so far as operating the departments is concerned. Each instructor has almost a little world unto himself and is independent of anyone else in the department. It was thought best, however, that the different departments should be arranged in separate groups.

The library is intimately connected with the work of every student. To this he goes for inspiration, study, and research; hence it is of high importance that it be placed on the first floor and in a position of most convenient access to all.

The foregoing, with practice rooms, as will be hereafter described, have been termed the instructional section; and the concert hall and its appurtenances, the student recital chamber, and the museum have been considered as largely for the use of the public and in the building have been classified as the public section. These latter features have been shown in easy communication with the instructional section, as is indeed necessary by the nature of their uses, and in fact is such as to suggest a separate building. The problem of making these two distinct units hang together logically has been one of the most momentous in the working out of the problem.

The Circulation.

The problem of general circulation might have been solved, with good basis in logic, exactly the opposite to that solution herewith presented. The instructional section has been placed at the secondary approach and the concert hall has been located at the pri-

mary approach, nearest the avenues of greatest travel. It was thought that the imposing colonnade and dome of the concert hall should be placed where their effect would be more pronounced as this particular end of the building is most expressive of the character of the institution. The view from the sunken garden and campus should be an imposing one. This arrangement may work some hardship to the students if required to traverse the entire length of the building in order to reach the entrance, but it would be possible at any time to enter the building at the concert hall end from whence passage to the instructional section is direct. Circulation within the building is accomplished by long, straight corridors running from end to end of the building. These lines of travel are, it is thought, so simple and so obvious that no confusion could possible result. The stairways are located at the places where they are required. The circulation of the second floor is exactly the same as that of the first. The concert hall and foyer have been provided with most commodious exits.

Lighting.

All rooms and corridors save the corridor to the side of the concert hall are lighted directly by either ceiling or wall lights. The corridor at the side of the concert hall is brilliantly lighted at each end and with additional light diffused through doorways and glazed partitions, if necessary, it would be satisfactorily lighted. The concert hall is to have an immense sky-light in the dome.

General Discussion.

The voice department has been placed on the first floor level. The studios have been separated from each other by means of a small reception room and an office for the instructor. This feature serves as a sort of sound-proofing between the successive studios.

It will be noted that the studios themselves do not have any opening whatever directly into the corridor. It is believed that by this method of construction much of the annoyance common to a music school,--that is, transmission of sounds through walls and partitions,--will be avoided.

The piano department has been arranged with five studios in the first story and five others just above in the second story. The studios have been separated here as in the voice department and no direct connection is made with the corridors. The orchestra and band instrument studios have been arranged with large rooms for the storage of instruments, music racks, music, et cetera, and the studios proper, being 25 x 35 feet in size, are large enough to guarantee the free production of tone. Two other such rooms are located on the second floor above these.

The library is commodious enough for a large collection of books and manuscripts. There is also space for a considerable number of seats at library tables where the student can avail himself of such research as the library will afford. The librarian has been provided with an office, toilet, and cloak-room; a storage space has been arranged within which shipments of books can be received and catalogued for shelves. This space would be used for books in process of rebinding or repairing. It would be possible, if desired, to subdivide this room so that a fire and burglar-proof vault could be provided for storage of valuable instruments and manuscripts.

Distinct rooms for ensemble singing and piano are not provided for the reason that the concert hall, the recital chamber and the lecture room above the recital chamber on the second floor seem to give ample space for the purposes of these departments.

The offices for instructors not otherwise provided for are placed in the wing corresponding to the administration section.

The concert hall consists of a main floor and balcony, the first of which is reached by means of a monumental entrance hall. The balconies are reached by means of magnificent stairways at each side of the entrance hall, which open into the foyer. Statuary and tablets commemorative of the great masters of the past are displayed in abundance. The concert hall itself is octagonal in plan and is covered with a richly ornamental dome in keeping with the uses to which the room will be put. The ceiling of the concert hall has been heavily coffered for the purposes of acoustics. It has been determined that such a treatment of the ceiling is most effective in reducing the inevitable echo to a minimum. The octagonal plan would also tend to increase the possibility of echo. The seating capacity is fifteen hundred.

Rooms for the artists who will appear before the audience have been provided at the sides of the stage. Cloak and toilet rooms for the convenience of concert hall patrons are in easy communication with the foyer.

The student recital chamber is provided for a seating capacity of three hundred and will be used at frequent intervals for informal presentation of musical works or for audiences composed largely of the students. The function of this room is fundamentally an instructional one, as it is required chiefly so that the students may note the difficulties of others in recital work, but it has been placed in the public wing so that those who are interested in the works of the students may find access to the room very conveniently. The stage has been shown.

On the second floor considerable area will be available for division into practice rooms, of which a large number would be desirable as the student will spend from three to six hours daily at practice. The space over the library will be divided into class rooms for the use of large sections in musical history, counterpoint, harmony, and other subjects related to the theory of music. The remainder of the second floor area not assigned hertofore to other purposes would be divided by glass partitions into rooms for practice. From twenty to forty such rooms can be provided on the second floor, depending upon the space which is allowed for each one, and the attic above the foyer, which will be lighted with sky-lights, will be divided into many more practice rooms.

The court or enclosed garden has been designed with the idea of providing a tranquil place for study and inspiration. The garden may be made beautiful through the use of shrubs and flowers and quiet, shaded bowers with seats and statuary and fountains with playing water. The elevated terrace overlooking the garden is set with potted plants, statuary, tables, and seats. The space might be used to seat an audience before a band or an orchestra playing in the garden. At the concert hall end of the garden is a monumental fountain with sculptures expressive of the function of the building.

The plan has been arranged so that as far as possible the circulation and important units in the plan are intimated in the elevation either by projection or fenestration.

The elevation itself throughout is expressive of the uses for which this building will be employed. For this purpose the Paris Opera House was studied somewhat closely, as it has been considered

highly expressive of the spirit of music. The drawings of the Ecole des Beaux Arts were of great assistance to the designer.

Construction.

The construction will be fire-proof throughout, probably of reinforced concrete, faced with marble. The dome must, of course, be of steel construction. The basement walls and footings will be of concrete. All the walls and partitions between studios and corridors will be thoroughly sound-proof and this, in connection with the absence of any direct communication between studios and corridors, will avoid the transmission of sounds to the greatest extent possible.

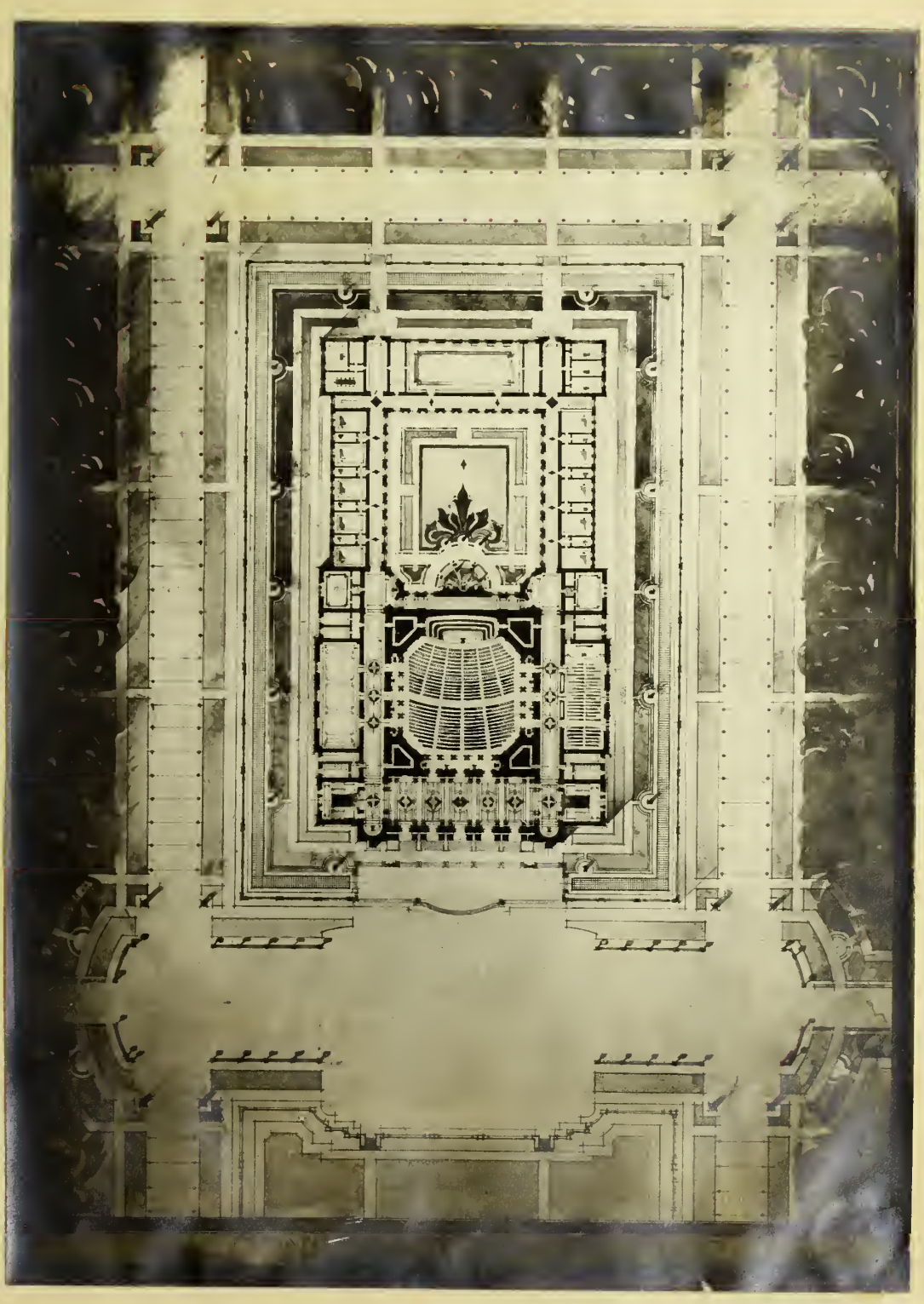
University of Illinois
Department of Architecture

Year Senior

Subject Thesis-A Conservatory of Music

Drawing Elevation Scale

Student R. T. Jones

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